

Message Text

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LIMDIS

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (WEISNER, ADMIRAL MAURICE F.)
SUBJ: KEY POINTS OF DISCUSSIONS DURING VISIT OF CINCPAC TO BANGKOK
MAY 17-19

SUMMARY: DURING THE VISIT OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
PACIFIC, ADMIRAL WEISNER, TO BANGKOK MAY 17-19, HIS THAI
HOSTS WENT ALL OUT TO GIVE HIM A WARM WELCOME. PRIME
MINISTER KRIANGSAK IN PARTICULAR SOUGHT TO DEMONSTRATE HIS
PLEASURE OVER THE VISIT, COMING SHORTLY AFTER THE VISIT OF
VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE, AND THE EVIDENCE IT PROVIDED OF
CLOSE THAI-AMERICAN RELATIONS. KRIANGSAK CLEARLY WANTS CON-
TINUED, CLOSE RELATIONS WITH U.S. MAIN SUBJECTS DISCUSSED
DURING VISIT INCLUDED REVIEW OF SITUATION AFFECTING VIET-
NAM, LAOS, CAMBODIA, CHINA, ASEAN, BURMA, AND MILITARY
PROCUREMENT ISSUES. END SUMMARY.

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1. THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF PACIFIC (CINCPAC), ADMIRAL
MAURICE F. WEISNER, MADE A HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO BANGKOK,
MAY 17-19. PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK, SENIOR OFFICERS OF
THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT, AND SENIOR OFFICERS OF THE ROYAL
THAI ARMED FORCES MADE A MAJOR EFFORT TO WELCOME ADMIRAL
WEISNER AND MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF. AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE

ACCOMPANIED THE ADMIRAL AND TOOK PART IN ALL OF THE SUBSTANTIVE MEETINGS. IN THE COURSE OF THE WIDE-RANGING CONVERSATIONS WHICH TOOK PLACE DURING SOCIAL EVENTS AND OFFICIAL CALLS DURING THE VISIT, THE FOLLOWING MAIN POINTS EMERGED:

2. ATMOSPHERICS - PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK AND HIS COLLEAGUES WENT TO CONSIDERABLE LENGTHS TO DEMONSTRATE PARTICULARLY WARM REGARD FOR THE UNITED STATES THROUGHOUT THE VISIT. COMING IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE VISIT OF VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE (MAY 4-5), THE VISIT OF ADMIRAL WEISNER WAS AN OCCASION FOR DEMONSTRATING AGAIN WHAT KRIANGSAK CLEARLY REGARDS AS THE CLOSENESS OF THAI AND UNITED STATES INTERESTS IN A NUMBER OF AREAS. THROUGHOUT HIS COMMENTS DURING THE WEISNER VISIT KRIANGSAK STUDDED PHRASES SUCH AS, "AS I SAID TO VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE," OR, "AS VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE REMARKED." THE VISIT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY WELL-RECEIVED BY PRIME MINISTER KRINAGSAK, AND THE VISIT OF ADMIRAL WEISNER ADDED ICING TO THE CAKE.

3. KRIANGSAK DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE TIME AND EFFORT TO THE WEISNER VISIT. HE APPEARED AT THE AIRPORT TO MEET ADMIRAL WEISNER ON HIS ARRIVAL MAY 17, WEARING HIS FIGURATIVE HAT AS SUPREME COMMANDER OF THE ROYAL THAI ARMED FORCES AND DRESSED IN AN AIR CHIEF MARSHAL'S UNIFORM. STILL EMPHASIZING HIS POSITION AS SUPREME COMMANDER, RATHER
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THAN AS PRIME MINISTER, KRIANGSAK APPEARED AT THE DINNER IN HONOR OF ADMIRAL WEISNER MAY 18, DRESSED IN AN ADMIRAL'S UNIFORM. AT THE FIRST ENCOUNTER AT THE AIRPORT ADMIRAL WEISNER ADDRESSED KRIANGSAK AS PRIME MINISTER. KRIANGSAK CORRECTED HIM AND SAID HE WAS APPEARING AS SUPREME COMMANDER.

4. THROUGHOUT THE CALL THE THAI WERE AT PAINS TO SHOWER COURTESIES ON ADMIRAL WEISNER AND HIS PARTY. KRIANGSAK DEVOTED VIRTUALLY ALL OF MAY 18 TO HIS VISITOR, INCLUDING AN OFFICIAL CALL AT HIS OFFICE, LUNCH, AN AFTERNOON OF GOLF, AND A LAVISH DINNER AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE. MOREOVER, KRIANGSAK EVIDENTLY HAD HIS PHOTOGRAPHERS UP MOST OF THE NIGHT OF MAY 18-19, FOR THE PHOTO ALBUM PRESENTED TO ADMIRAL WEISNER AT HIS DEPARTURE MAY 19 INCLUDED PICTURES TAKEN AT THE DINNER THE NIGHT BEFORE.

5. VIET-NAM - THAI CONCERNS ABOUT VIET-NAM CAME UP THROUGHOUT THE VISIT, WITH KRIANGSAK COVERING THIS SUBJECT IN SOME DETAIL IN THE CONTEXT OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH CHINESE LEADERS DURING HIS VISIT TO THE PRC IN APRIL. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT THE PRC REGARDS THE VIETNAMESE AS REVISIONISTS.

DURING THE VIET-NAM WAR CHINA FURNISHED MUCH SUPPORT TO NORTH VIET-NAM, INCLUDING BOTH ARMS AND MUNITIONS AS WELL AS FOOD, ESPECIALLY RICE. NOW THE VIETNAMESE WERE DESCRIBED BY THE PRC AS LEANING TOWARD THE SOVIETS, WHO ARE COMING TO DOMINATE THE SRV. IF VIET-NAM ALLOWS THE SOVIET UNION TO USE THE FACILITIES AS CAMRANH BAY, CHINA WILL REGARD THIS AS A VERY SERIOUS MATTER. ON THE OTHER HAND, KRIANGSAK NOTED THAT THE FIRST THAI COMMERCIAL FLIGHT FROM BANGKOK TO HANOI TOOK PLACE MAY 17, AND SUBSEQUENT FLIGHTS WOULD BE TWICE WEEKLY. HE SAID THAT THAI AIRWAYS WOULD HAVE AN OFFICE IN HANOI.

6. IN RESPONSE TO ADMIRAL WEISNER'S QUESTION REGARDING VIETNAMESE INTENTIONS KRIANGSAK SAID THAT THE VIETNAMESE
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WOULD LIKE TO ESTABLISH HEGEMONY OVER INDO-CHINA. THAT IS WHY THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN STATES MUST REMAIN STRONG.

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7. LAOS - PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK SAID THAT LAOS IS IN A DIFFICULT POSITION. LAOTIAN GOVERNMENT FIGURES HAD TOLD HIM NOT TO WORRY ABOUT LAOS, AS IT IS A SMALL COUNTRY. HOWEVER, LAOS WILL DO WHAT IT HAS TO DO. THAILAND AND LAOS ARE DEVELOPING THEIR ECONOMIC COOPERATION. ADMIRAL WEISNER COMMENTED THAT LAOS APPEARS TO BE DOMINATED BY VIET-NAM. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT IT IS DOMINATED BY BOTH VIET-NAM AND THE PRC. ADMIRAL WEISNER SAID THAT THE CHINESE ARE CONTINUING THEIR ROAD CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY IN LAOS. KRIANGSAK AGREED BUT COMMENTED THAT THE ROADS HAVE NOT BEEN FINISHED. THE CHINESE MAY BE GOING SLOW TO MAINTAIN THEIR PRESENCE THERE AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT HE HAD TOLD LAO PRIME MINISTER NOT TO WORRY ABOUT THAILAND.

8. CAMBODIA - PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK SAID THAT CCHINA
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WAS SUPPORTING CAMBODIA WITH TWO SHIPS OF 7000 TONS WHICH VISIT THE COUNTRY TWICE A MONTH. CHINA IS FURNISHING CAMBODIA WITH 122 MM. AND 130 MM GUNS AND 107 MM AND 120 MM ROCKETS. HE KNEW, FROM SHELL FRAGMENTS FOUND IN THAILAND WHEN THE CAMBODIANS HAVE FIRED ACROSS THE BORDER, THAT THE CAMBODIANS HAVE NEW EQUIPMENT IN THE BORDER AREA. IN THE OLD DAYS THE CAMBODIANS HAD SIMPLY USED U.S. EQUIPMENT LEFT THERE. NOW THEY ALSO HAVE NEW GUNS, MUNITIONS, AND ROCKETS. TH CAMBODIANS SUPPORT THE SIAM ORGANIZATION (ANGKA SIEM) AGAINST THAILAND. THAILAND REMAINS CALM AND TRIES NOT TO OVER-REACT TO CAMBODIA ATTACKS, BUT THE HOPED-FOR TALKS ON THE BORDER HAVE NOT TAKEN PLACE. THAILAND CANNOT WAIT AROUND MUCH LONGER WITHOUT RESPONDING TO THE ATTACKS. SOME ADDITIONAL THAI MILITARY AND POLICE HAVE BEEN SENT TO THE SOUTHERN PART OF NORTHEAST THAILAND, BUT OVERALL THAI FORCES IN THAT AREA ARE WEAK. THAILAND MUST DO SOMETHING TO REASSURE THE THAI PEOPLE. ADMIRAL WEISNER SAID THAT HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT CAMBODIA'S OBJECTIVES ARE. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND THEM EITHER.. HE SAID THAT THE CAMBODIAN LEADERS ARE NOT COMFORTABLE IN TERMS OF THEIR CONTROL. WHEN THE CAMBODIANS ARE FIGHTING THE VIETNAMESE, IT DOES NOT MAKE ANY SENSE TO BE FIGHTING IN THEIR REAR (AGAINST THAILAND). THE CAMBODIANS THINK THAT THE THAI GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS INSURGENTS WHO MAKE RAIDS INTO CAMBODIA. KRIANGSAK ADDED THAT THE THAI GOVERNMENT HAS STOPPED SUCH ACTIVITY. THAILAND NOW MAKES ATTACKS ON CAMBODIA ONLY IN RETALIATION FOR CAMBODIAN ATTACKS ON THAILAND. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT THAILAND HAS THE MILITARY CAPABILITY TO "WALK TO PHNOM PENH. THEY CANNOT STOP US."

9. IN A SEPARATE MEETING WITH MINISTER OF DEFENSE LEK
NAEOMALI, LEK COMMENTED THAT SKIRMISHES HAVE OCCURRED ALONG
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THE THAI-CAMBODIAN BORDER TO A CONSIDERABLE DEGREE. THE
CAMBODIANS ARE TRAINING THAI INSURGENTS INSIDE CAMBODIA
IN SEVERAL SCHOOLS TO SUPPORT THE THAI INSURGENCY. RE-
CENTLY, THE CAMBODIANS HAVE BEEN KIDNAPPING THAI PEOPLE
FROM THE BORDER AREA AND TAKING THEM INTO CAMBODIA FOR
FORCED INDOCTRINATION. THIS HAS NOT BEEN COMPLETELY
SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE THE PEOPLE TRY TO ESCAPE, AND MANY
SUCCEED. LEK TERMED THE KIDNAPPINGS A TYPICAL VIETNAMESE
TACTIC. ON THE VIETNAMESE-CAMBODIAN STRUGGLE LEK SAID THAT
CAMBODIAN SKIRMISHING STARTED HOSTILITIES, BUT LONG-
RANGE VIETNAMESE OBJECTIVES ALSO CAUSED THE. LEK NOTED
THAT FOR SOME TIME THAILAND HAS BEEN ENCOURAGING CAMBODIAN
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER IENG SARY TO VISIT THAILAND. HOW-
EVER, HE KEEPS POSTPONING THE VISIT. LEK CHARACTERIZED
THIS AS A TYPICAL COMMUNIST TACTIC.

10. CHINA- PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK DESCRIBED HIS RECENT
TRIP TO CHINA AT SOME LENGTH. HE SAID THAT HE HAD HEARD
STRONG WORDS AGAINST THE USSR FROM THE CHINESE, WHO EX-
PRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE SOVIET PRESENCE IN ASIA. HE
SAID A CHINESE LEADER ASKED HIM IF THERE WERE NOT U.S.
AIR FORCE UNITS IN THAILAND WHICH WERE GIVING THAILAND
ASSISTANCE AGAINST THE CAMBODIANS. KRIANGSAK SAID HE TOLD
HIM THAT ALL U.S. FORCES ARE GONE FROM THAILAND. ONLY
JUSMAG WAS IN THAILAND, TO ASSIST THE THAI WITH COORDINATION
OF U.S. PURCHASES THEY MUST MAKE. ADMIRAL WEISNER EX-
PRESSED SURPRISE THAT THE CHINESE DID NOT KNOW THAT THERE
WAS NO LONGER A U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND.

11. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT THE CHINESE HAD ASSURED HIM THAT
THEY WOULD NOT INTERFERE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, BUT HE WAS
SKEPTICAL ON THE POINT. THE PRC IS DEFINITELY CONCERNED
ABOUT SOVIET ACTIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, PARTICULARLY IN VIET-
NAM. THE CHINESE TOLD HIM THEY SUPPORTED ASEAN AGAINST
WHAT THEY REGARDED AS VIETNAMESE PRESSURE. THE CHINESE
TOLD HIM THAT OVERSEAS CHINESE SHOULD FOLLOW THE LAWS OF
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THE COUNTRY IN WHICH THEY RESIDE. HOWEVER, THEY SHOULD
ALSO BE ABLE TO KEEP CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH
CHINA. KRIANGSAK DOES NOT COMPLETELY BELIEVE WHAT THEY
SAY AND THINKS THEY TOLD HIM THIS TO MAKE HIM HAPPY. HE

BELIEVES THAT THE CHINESE WANT A VERY STRONG RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OVERSEAS CHINESE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

12. DURING HIS VISIT TO CHINA KRIANSACK SAID THAT HE OBSERVED 10 CHINESE DIVISIONS--SIX OF THEM ARMORED--AND CONSIDERED THEIR TRAINING TO BE GOOD. THEY HAD GOOD MEDIUM TANKS. OVERALL, HE SAID THAT THAILAND WANTS TO BE FRIENDLY WITH BOTH CHINA AND THE USSR. THAILAND WILL SEND MILITARY ATTACHES TO BOTH COUNTRIES.

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13. ASEAN - KRIANSACK TOUCHED ONLY BRIEFLY ON ASEAN. HE SAID THAT IN HIS SPEECH IN HONG KONG HE HAD NOTED THAT CHINA SUPPORTED ASEAN AND ITS CONCEPT OF THE ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM, AND NEUTRALITY. HE SAID THAT HE HAD ADVOCATED NO INTERFERENCE IN ASEAN BY ANY BIG POWERS AND NOTED THAT CHINA SUPPORTS THIS VIEW. ASEAN IS A MAJOR INTEREST OF THAILAND. IT IS ESSENTIAL TO GET THE YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED IN IT THROUGH SEMINARS, CONFERENCES, AND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THAILAND IS EAK, SEAN IS INSECURE.

14. BURMA - THERE WAS A BRIEF REVIEW OF COOPERATION BETWEEN BURMA AND THAILAND IN THE NARCOTICS FIELD, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CROP SUBSTITUTION FOR OPIUM
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CULTIVATION. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT HE HAD JUST VISITED BURMA AND FOUND THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN 16 YEARS -- NOTHING SEEMS TO HAPPEN. ADMIRAL WEISNER COMMENTED THAT HE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT WAS NOW MORE FORTHCOMING THAN IT HAD BEEN IN THE PAST. KRIANGSAK AGREED, ADDING THAT, "THE YOUNGER PEOPLE ARE COMING UP NOW, AND MOST OF THEM ARE MY FRIENDS." IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER UPPADIT, THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT BURMA IS NOW SHOWING A BETTER ATTITUDE ON NARCOTICS COOPERATION. THE TRADE PROSPECTS HAVE ALSO IMPROVED, AS THE BURMESE ARE SENDING A TRADE DELEGATION TO THAILAND. BURMA IS PREPARED TO SEND MINERALS, FISH AND WOOD TO THAILAND. UPPADIT SAID THAT THERE ARE STILL PROBLEMS INVOLVING THAI FISHERMEN WHO ARE ARRESTED IN BURMA AND HELD THERE IN JAIL.

15. MILITARY PROCUREMENT - THIS SUBJECT OCCUPIED THE BULK OF THE CONVERSATIONS WITH PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK. HE WAS AT SOME PAINS TO EMPHASIZE HIS DESIRE FOR CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND UNDERLINED HIS VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING THE MILITARY RELATIONSHIP LONG-ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE SAID THAT WHAT THAILAND NEEDS FROM THE US IS MORE MILITARY CREDITS, BETTER CREDIT TERMS, AND MORE RAPID DELIVERY. THAILAND HAS DANGEROUS NEIGHBORS WHO ARE WELL-EQUIPPED BY THEIR FRIENDS. THAILAND NEEDS RAPID DELIVERY OF THE EQUIPMENT IT NEEDS. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT HE WANTED JUSMAG TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE THAI ARMED FORCES, PROVIDING ADVICE ON PROCUREMENT, ARRANGING FOR THE TRAINING OF THAI OFFICERS IN THE UNITED STATES, AND FACILITATING PURCHASES THROUGH THE FMS PROGRAM. THERE WAS A NEED TO USE THE 40 PEOPLE IN JUSMAG MORE FULLY AND MORE FRUITFULLY TO PROVIDE THE ADVICE AND INFORMATION THE THAI NEED.

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16. ADMIRAL WEISNER NOTED THAT RETIRED ADMIRAL SA-NGAT CHALOYU (CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL POLICY COUNCIL) WILL BE VISITING HONOLULU MAY 25-26 AND THAT HE HOPED TO SEE THE ADMIRAL. ADMIRAL WEISNER SAID THAT WE CAN'T TELL THE THAI

WHAT THEY SHOULD BUY, BUT WE CAN CERTAINLY MAKE INFORMATION AVAILABLE.

17. PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK SAID THAT THE THAI FACE SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN TERMS OF THE SUPPORTABILITY OF SOME OF THE SYSTEMS PROVIDED UNDER US MILITARY ASSISTANCE IN THE PAST. WITH ONLY US\$30 MILLION IN CREDITS THIS YEAR AND DELAYS IN DELIVERY, DUE TO TOO LONG A LEAD TIME, THE THAI WILL HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE TO PROCURING SOME OF THEIR NEEDS FROM THIRD COUNTRIES. THERE IS A NEED FOR THAILAND TO FEEL MENTALLY SECURE. IF THAILAND CANNOT GET WHAT IT NEEDS FROM THE US, IT MUST GO TO OTHER SOURCES FOR MILITARY EQUIPMENT. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT THE VICKERS SCORPION LIGHT TANKS RECENTLY ORDERED FROM BRITAIN ARE AVAILABLE MUCH SOONER THAN ANY FROM THE US. THAILAND CAN SATISFY ITS NEEDS FOR ANTI-AIRCRAFT EQUIPMENT FROM FRANCE AND BRITAIN, WHICH WILL SHIFT PRIORITIES FROM OTHER COUNTRIES TO ASSURE EARLY DELIVERY TO THAILAND. THAILAND WILL ORDER PANHARD ARMORED CARS FROM FRANCE. SUBSEQUENT SUPPORT OF SUCH EQUIPMENT WILL BE DIFFICULT, BUT THAILAND HAS NO CHOICE.

18. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT THAILAND NEEDS SOME SOPHISTICATED WEAPONS. IT HAD SOUGHT MISSILES FOR ITS PATROL BOATS FROM THE US BUT HAD BEEN TOLD THAT THESE WERE TOO SOPHISTICATED. THEREFORE, THAILAND HAD PURCHASED EXOCET MISSILES FROM FRANCE. HE SAID THAT AT ONE POINT THE US THOUGHT THE F-5E WAS TOO SOPHISTICATED FOR THAILAND. HOWEVER, THE OTHER SIDE HAD MIG-21'S IN LAOS. THE CAMBODIANS HAVE T-28'S, BUT THEY WILL LIKELY GET MIG'S BEFORE LONG. THAI PILOTS WANT SOMETHING BETTER THAN WHAT THE ENEMY HAS. THAILAND NEEDS SOMETHING MORE SOPHISTICATED THAN THE
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F-5E AND CAN GET SUCH AN AIRCRAFT FROM FRANCE OR ENGLAND. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT IT IS HARD TO STOP THE THINKING OF THE THAI PEOPLE AND THE THAI ARMED FORCES, WHO WANT THE BEST EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE. THEY NEED SOMETHING MORE SOPHISTICATED, SUCH AS A TOKEN NUMBER OF F-15 FIGHTERS-- WITH THREE, THAILAND WOULD BE HAPPY.

19. ADMIRAL WEISNER SAID HE THOUGHT VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S STATEMENT AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE US BEING PREPARED TO BE A RELIABLE SUPPLIER OF THAI MILITARY REQUIREMENTS HAD BEEN VERY GOOD. KRIANGSAK AGREED BUT ADDED THAT, " WE ALSO NEED ACTION." AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE SAID HE WAS INTERESTED IN THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ATTITUDE OF THE THAI PEOPLE, AND ASKED IF THEY REALLY THINK THAT SEVEN MILLION CAMBODIANS WILL ATTACK MORE THAN 40 MILLION THAI. KRIANGSAK ANSWERED THAT PART OF THE PROBLEM IS HOW TO PERSUADE THE PEOPLE. THEY KNOW THAT TWO TO FOUR MILLION

PEOPLE WITH WEAPONS COULD CAUSE TROUBLE IF THEY WERE
SUPPORTED BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY. THE THREAT IS IN THE
MINDS OF THE THAI PEOPLE.

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20. ADMIRAL WEISNER SAID THAT WE WILL LOOK INTO THOSE
MILITARY EQUIPMENT ITEMS WHICH ARE IN PROCESS AND SEEK TO
IMPROVE THE DELIVERY TIMES. HE SAID THAT THE F-5E FIGHTER
IS AN EXCELLENT AIRCRAFT AND ADDED THAT HE WAS SURE
KRIANGSAK KNEW ITS CHARACTERISTICS. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT
HE KNEW ITS CHARACTERISTICS, BUT THE THAI ARMED FORCES
WANT AIRCRAFT MORE SOPHISTICATED THAN THE F-5E. ADMIRAL
WEISNER SAID THAT AIRCRAFT MORE SOPHISTICATED THAN THE
F-5E ARE ALSO MORE COSTLY.

21. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT THAILAND NEEDS SPARE PARTS
FOR ITS US-MADE M-41 TANKS (IT CURRENTLY HAS 176 OF THEM).
A GENERAL DISCUSSION ENSUED WHICH INDICATED THAT THE US
CAN PROVIDE CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR M-41 TANKS THROUGH
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22. KRIANGSAK DISCUSSED THE THAI NAVY'S DEEP SEA PORT AT SATTAHIP. THAILAND WOULD NEED TO SPEND SOME MONEY TO INCREASE ITS CAPACITY, BUT IT SHOULD BE USED. HE IMPLIED THAT THE THAI NAVY IS NOT USING THIS PORT TO ANY GREAT EXTENT AND SAID THE NAVY SHOULD USE IT OR TURN IT LOOSE. HE SAID THAT THAILAND NEEDED HELP FROM JUSMAG IN TERMS OF INCREASING SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN DEFENSE PRODUCTION AND IN DEFENSE INDUSTRY. AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE AND COLONEL RWALKER (CHIEF, JUSMAGTHAI) POINTED OUT THAT SEVERAL FACILITIES AVE BEEN PROVIDED IN THE PAST UNDER MAP (VEHICLE REBUILD PLANT, AMMUNITION PLANT, PRIMER PLANT, BATTERY PLANT, JET ENGINE OVERHAUL FACILITY, AND HELI-COPTER DEPOT), BUT THESE HAD BEEN UNDER-UTILIZED. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT, TO BUILD THE MORALE OF THE THAI PEOPLE THE THAI ARMED FORCES NEED PRODUCTION AND TECHNICAL KNOW HOW FROM THE US TO INCREASE DEFENSE PRODUCTION AND TO MODERNIZE FACILITIES. THE THAI ARMED FORCES DO NOT DO ENOUGH TO MODERNIZE THEMSELVES.

23. IN CLOSING THIS PORTION OF THE DISCUSSION KRIANGSAK SAID THAT HE WANTS TO RETURN TO THE KIND OF CLOSE RELATIONS THAILAND HAD WITH THE UNITED STATES IN THE PAST AND EMPHASIZED THE MILITARY RELATIONSHIP IN PARTICULAR. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN SORRY TO SEE THE MILITARY RELATIONSHIP END. AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE SAID THAT HE THOUGHT WE HAD CLOSED DOWN OUR MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND IN 1976 WITHOUT ANY BITTERNESS OR RANCOR. HE SAID THAT WE UNDERSTOOD THAT THAILAND AND THE US HAD SOMEWHAT DIFFERING NATIONAL OBJECTIVES, BUT THERE WAS NO BITTERNESS ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO BITTERNESS ON THE SIDE OF THE THAI.

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24. KRIANGSAK SAID THAT THAILAND CURRENTLY GETS VERY LITTLE ASSISTANCE FROM ITS ALLIES, WHILE "HE OTHER SIDE" (A CLEAR REFERENCE TO VIET-NAM) GETS TWO OR THREE SHIPMENTS EVERY WEEK. AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE SAID THAT VIET-NAM IS NOT GETTING MUCH INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND THAT SOME OF THE COUNTRIES THAT SUPPORTED OR SYMPATHIZED WITH THE COMMUNIST SIDE DURING THE VIET-NAM WAR ARE FINDING THAT A COMMUNIST VIET-NAM IS NOT AS ATTRACTIVE A REALITY AS THEY HOPED IT WOULD BE.

25. COMMENT: THE SERIES OF MEETINGS AND CONVERSATIONS SHOWED KRIANGSAK AT HIS BEST AND HIS WORST. WHEN HE DISCUSSES THE SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND, IN PARTICULAR, THAI RELATIONSHIPS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS, HE SHOWS A SOPHISTICATED UNDERSTANDING OF POWER REALITIES AND SENSITIVITY TO THE MOTIVATIONS OF NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. HE IS AT HIS WORST IN DISCUSSING MILITARY EQUIPMENT ISSUES. WHILE WE KNOW THAT THAI MILITARY AT THE WORKING LEVEL KNOW THE MILITARY EQUIPMENT ISSUES VERY WELL, SOMEHOW THIS KNOWLEDGE HAS NOT SEEMED TO MOVE UPWARDS TO KRIANGSAK IN ENOUGH DETAIL TO ENABLE HIM TO SPEAK TO THE ISSUES IN A REALISTIC WAY. AS THE ABOVE ACCOUNT INDICATES, KRIANGSAK FREQUENTLY HAD ONLY SKIMPY OR MISLEADING INFORMATION ON THE MILITARY EQUIPMENT ISSUES HE RAISED.

26. A RANGE OF INFLUENCES (PRICE, AVAILABILITY OF ITEMS, DELIVERY TIMES, AND THE PROSPECT OF "INSIDE COMMISSIONS" FROM NON-US SOURCES OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT) IS PUSHING THAILAND TO PURCHASE A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF ITS MILITARY EQUIPMENT NEEDS FROM OTHER THAN US SOURCES. WHILE FEARING THAT THIS TREND IS INEVITABLE, KRIANGSAK IS DEEPLY UNHAPPY ABOUT IT, AS IT IS NOT WHAT HE WANTS TO SEE. HIS WHOLE PROFESSIONAL LIFE HAS INVOLVED VERY CLOSE CONTACT WITH AMERICAN MILITARY FIGURES, WITH MANY OF WHOM HE HAS MAINTAINED AND WANTS TO CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN

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MAINTAIN THE CLOSEST OF PERSONAL FRIENDSHIPS. WE BELIEVE HE IS WORRIED THAT A SHIFT IN PROCUREMENT PATTERNS WILL SLOWLY BUT INEVITABLY MOVE THAILAND AWAY FROM ITS CLOSE MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US. HE SEES THIS NOT ONLY AS REGRETTABLE BUT PERHAPS EVEN AS HIGHLY DAMAGING TO THAI NATIONAL INTERESTS. IN THE LONG RUN KRIANGSAK, LIKE MANY OTHER SENIOR THAI MILITARY AND POLITICAL FIGURES, HOPES THAT, IF THE SECURITY OF THAILAND IS SERIOUSLY THREATENED BY A DOMESTIC INSURGENCY OR PRESSURE FROM ITS COMMUNIST NEIGHBORS (OR BOTH), THE UNITED STATES WILL SUPPORT THAILAND TO THE EXTENT NECESSARY. AGAINST THIS PERSPECTIVE, A DRIFT AWAY FROM CLOSE THAI RELATIONS WITH THE US IN THE MILITARY PROCUREMENT FIELD IS A NEGATIVE TREND WHICH WORRIES KRIANGSAK AND MANY OTHER SENIOR THAI MILITARY FIGURES.

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